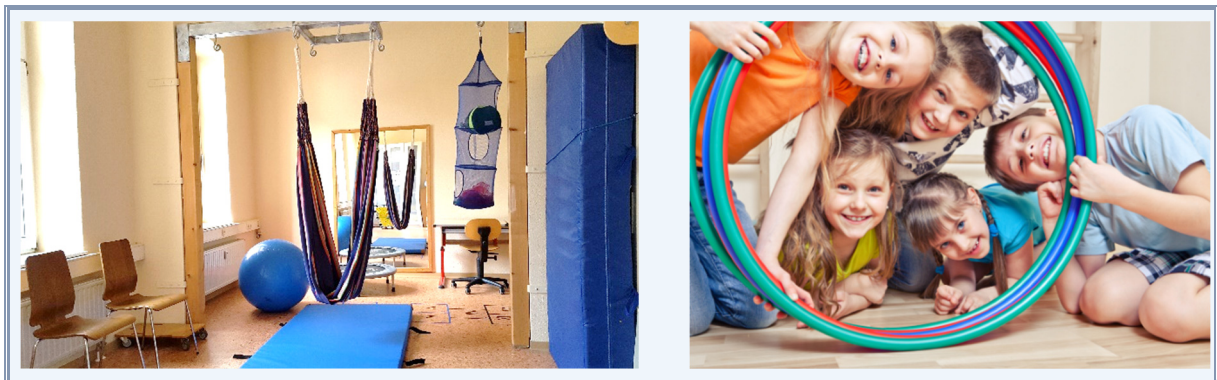


## Guide

### for students in the field of occupational therapy on how to complete an internship in another European country



**Part of the EUPRAC curriculum for the practical training of occupational therapists in the context of internships in other European countries**

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This guideline is intended to support students in the field of occupational therapy in competently preparing for an internship phase in another European country and thus ensures a smooth process until the start of the internship. This document complements the preparation procedure of the respective educational institution, which usually consists of the following components:

- Information event in the first semester of a university or higher education course or in the first semester of training at a higher vocational school for occupational therapy,
- Counselling services offered by the internship coordinators at the respective educational institutions,
- Information material on the website of the respective educational institution,
- If applicable, a database with contacts to partner institutions or networks in other European countries,
- Contacts to or reports on the experiences of students/students who have already completed an internship in another European country.

Therefore it is advisable to first attend the information event and find out about the opportunities and possibilities of an internship abroad as well as the support offered around the internship.

This guide consists of a tabular overview, which provides an overview of all the necessary steps up to the start of the internship, as well as a question and answer catalogue on frequently asked questions in connection with an internship in a European country abroad.

## 1. Overview of all necessary steps in the preparation phase of the internship abroad

In view of the recognition of the internship, which is to be completed abroad in Europe, it is necessary to implement the steps described below.

Note:

From point 4 of the table below, two different ways of preparation are presented. If students choose a placement institution in another European country for which there is already a cooperation with the sending educational institution, the required procedure should be taken from the left column. It is also possible for students to search for suitable placement institutions on their own. In this case, follow the steps in the column on the right.



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*Preparation of occupational therapy placements abroad*

**Necessary steps to prepare for an occupational therapy placement in another European country**

1	Attendance of the information event of the respective educational institution on the topic of "internships abroad" (time: first semester of a university or college education or first semester of education at a higher vocational school for occupational therapy)	
2	Study all available information material of the respective educational institution (website, brochures, databases on the topic of "internships abroad").	
3	<b>Contact the internship coordinator</b> at the respective educational institution to find out about internship opportunities, cooperation in other European countries, framework conditions and recognition procedures.	
Please select the appropriate procedure here, as described in the note!		
4	Students plan an internship with a cooperation partner of the educational institution	Students choose an internship institution for which there is not yet a cooperation with the educational institution
5	Obtain information on existing cooperation of the educational institution. (Appointment with internship coordinator or research in existing database)	<b>Independent research on internships</b> in other European countries (e.g.: <a href="https://erasmusintern.org/">https://erasmusintern.org/</a> , <a href="https://enothe.eu/">https://enothe.eu/</a> )
6	<b>Selecting a suitable internship position</b>	<b>Selecting a suitable internship position</b>
7		<b>Research on the internship coordination/contact person in the internship institution</b>
8	<b>Submit an application for the internship abroad</b> to the internship coordinator of the educational institution. (required documents: see question-answer catalogue)	<b>Submit an application for the internship abroad</b> to the internship coordinator of the educational institution. (required documents: see question-answer catalogue)
9	<b>Contacting the contact person</b> of the internship institution by the internship coordinator or the student	<b>Contacting the contact person</b> of the internship institution by the internship coordinator or the student

**Necessary steps to prepare for an occupational therapy placement in another European country**

10	<p>Obtain <b>information on the requirements of the internship</b> institution for the students.</p> <p>(See question and answer catalogue)</p>	<p>Obtain <b>information on the requirements of the internship</b> institution for the students.</p> <p>(See question and answer catalogue)</p>
11		<p><b>Clarification of the recognition criteria for internships</b> according to the WFOT and the requirements of the educational institution.</p> <p>(Use of "Questionnaire for the recognition of internships" - available at the internship coordination of the educational institution)</p>
12	<p><b>Organisational clarification with the internship institution:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact person for application (letter of motivation, CV, competence portfolio, etc.),</li> <li>• Possible period of the internship, including hours per week,</li> <li>• Possible subject area that can be completed,</li> <li>• accommodation in the vicinity of the internship institution,</li> <li>• required vaccination certificates,</li> <li>• relevant legal framework,</li> <li>• financial expenses incurred, possible support with financing, if applicable,</li> <li>• Possibility of a tandem internship...</li> </ul>	<p><b>Organisational clarification with the internship institution:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact person for application (letter of motivation, CV, competence portfolio, etc.),</li> <li>• Possible period of the internship, including hours per week,</li> <li>• Possible subject area that can be completed,</li> <li>• accommodation in the vicinity of the internship institution,</li> <li>• required vaccination certificates,</li> <li>• relevant legal framework,</li> <li>• financial expenses incurred, possible support with financing, if applicable,</li> <li>• Possibility of a tandem internship...</li> </ul>

### Necessary steps to prepare for an occupational therapy placement in another European country

13	<p><b>Clarification of funding, e.g. via Erasmus+ programme</b></p> <p>Notes on research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://erasmusplus.at/de/hochschulbildung/studierende-und-graduierte/">https://erasmusplus.at/de/hochschulbildung/studierende-und-graduierte/</a>,</li> <li>• <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates_de">https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates_de</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates_en">https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates_en</a></li> </ul> <p>Application may be possible in the own educational institution if accreditation is available - information can be obtained from the relevant internship coordination office</p>	<p><b>Clarification of funding, e.g. via Erasmus+ programme</b></p> <p>Notes on research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://erasmusplus.at/de/hochschulbildung/studierende-und-graduierte/">https://erasmusplus.at/de/hochschulbildung/studierende-und-graduierte/</a>,</li> <li>• <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates_de">https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates_de</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates_en">https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates_en</a></li> </ul> <p>Application may be possible in the own educational institution if accreditation is available - information can be obtained from the relevant internship coordination office</p>
14	<p>Drafting of the contractual arrangement for the internship abroad after agreement with all relevant stakeholders, use of the document "Learning Agreement. Student Mobility for Traineeships"</p> <p>(available at: <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/applicants/learning-agreement_en">https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/applicants/learning-agreement_en</a>)</p>	<p>Drafting of the contractual arrangement for the internship abroad after agreement with all relevant stakeholders, use of the document "Learning Agreement. Student Mobility for Traineeships"</p> <p>(available at: <a href="https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/applicants/learning-agreement_en">https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/applicants/learning-agreement_en</a>)</p>
15	<p>Clarification on <b>forms/documents to be submitted for the recognition of the internship</b> in the educational institution (See EUPRAC Curriculum 3.3, 6.1 as well as 9.4 Table of the respective institutions of the project partners of the EUPRAC Curriculum).</p>	<p>Clarification on <b>forms/documents to be submitted for the recognition of the internship</b> in the educational institution (See EUPRAC Curriculum 3.3, 6.1 as well as 9.4 Table of the respective institutions of the project partners of the EUPRAC Curriculum).</p>
16	<p><b>Travel arrangements</b> Internship coordinator available for further questions regarding the internship process</p>	<p><b>Travel arrangements</b> Internship coordinator available for further questions regarding the internship process</p>



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## 2. Question and answer catalogue for preparing occupational therapy placements in other European countries

In the following, questions related to the process of preparing for an internship abroad will be addressed. The questions and answers are listed in the order in which they might appear. Those interested in an internship abroad should first deal with the answers in order to be able to prepare specifically for a guidance interview with the internship coordinator of their own educational institution.

### Where can I get information about internships in other European countries?

The first point of contact for opportunities to complete internships in other European countries is the internship coordinator at your educational institution. They offer personal guidance interviews. You can also inform yourself using the information material provided. You will find a link to this on the website of your educational institution, and possibly also a database set up for this purpose. The guide also contains links to information on the Erasmus+ mobility programme.

The curriculum for practical training for prospective occupational therapists, which was developed within the framework of the EUPRAC project, offers a wide range of further information on completing internships in other European countries. Please use the following link: <https://www.ibkm-erasmus.de/home/>.

### Who are the contact persons in the institutions of the four countries involved in the EUPRAC project? Who could I contact if I have questions about the framework conditions of an internship in the respective country?

#### **Bulgaria**

University of Ruse „Angel Kanchev“  
8 Studentska str.,  
POB 7017, Ruse  
[pmincheva@uni-ruse.bg](mailto:pmincheva@uni-ruse.bg)  
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## **How do I make sure that the internship position in the European country abroad is recognised by my educational institution?**

The following minimum requirements apply for the recognition of internship positions available in other European countries:

- The institution/company providing the internship must be approved for the training/supervision of interns from the field of occupational therapy in accordance with the applicable state-specific regulations.
- Prerequisites for the assignment as a practice supervisor are:
  - a completed training as an occupational therapist,
  - completed training at a WFOT-recognised training centre,
  - professional experience of at least 1 - 2 years,
  - a weekly working time of at least 30 hours.
- With regard to guidance during the internship, it is recommended that one supervisor is available for each intern.

Further specifications refer to the possible duration of the internship, the number of hours that should be completed weekly or also to the subject areas offered in the internship institution.

In order to clarify all recognition criteria with the placement agency, please use the "Questionnaire for the recognition of placement agencies for the completion of occupational therapy placements in other European countries". You can request this questionnaire from your responsible internship coordinator. You will also find the document as an appendix under item 9.3 in the EUPRAC curriculum.

## **In which subject areas can internships be completed in the countries participating in the EUPRAC project - Germany, Austria, Bulgaria and Poland?**

Within the framework of the EUPRAC study, areas were identified in which the occupational therapy training courses of the participating project partners take place in a comparable manner: Paediatrics, Geriatrics, Psychiatry, Neurology and Orthopaedics (see also item 3.3 in the EUPRAC curriculum). In these areas, occupational therapy internships could be offered in other European countries in a comparable and recognisable manner.

## **Will the internships abroad count towards my training?**

(Cf. EUPRAC curriculum, item 3.2):

For the practical training of occupational therapists in the context of a placement abroad, the specific laws, curricula and regulations of the countries of origin as well as the guidelines and requirements of the respective sending educational institutions must always be observed (cf. EUPRAC study, compact version, 06/2020, p. 38 ff.). The WFOT standard can be used here as a uniform standard. However, it primarily refers to theoretical training in the field of occupational therapy at universities, colleges or higher vocational schools.

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Therefore, the sending institutions have a decisive responsibility with regard to checking the prerequisites of the internship places. This is already ensured in many universities, colleges or higher vocational schools through fixed cooperation with institutions and companies abroad. Internships that students/students look for themselves should, as is already frequently the case, go through an application and review process. For this purpose, the interested parties must be informed at an early stage.

The criteria for the recognition of internship places have already been named. In principle, every planned internship abroad should be clarified individually in advance by the sending educational institution and the internship provider.

### **Do I have to apply for an internship abroad at my educational institution?**

Those interested in an internship abroad should submit an application to the relevant internship coordinator. The documents must be submitted by the deadlines set by the respective educational institution (e.g. by 15 May and 15 November for an internship in the following semester or half-year). Documents to be submitted include:

- Letter of motivation: Why do you want to do an internship abroad, when and where,
- Overview of grades, academic or training performance,
- Copy of the recognition/qualification of the practice supervisor responsible in the placement institution,
- Description of the placement (flyer, internet printout, if necessary attach a description of the relationship to occupational therapy),
- Confirmation of the internship institution.

Please contact your internship coordinator for information on how to apply.

### **How do I finance my internship abroad?**

Among other things, it is possible to have internships abroad funded by the European Union's Erasmus+ mobility programme.

The EU grants usually cover travel and accommodation costs during the internship abroad. If applicable, you may also receive financial support for learning the local working language.

You cannot apply directly for a grant as an individual. Accredited organisations are eligible to apply. They then select candidates for internships abroad. Please contact your educational institution or the responsible internship coordinator to find out whether funding opportunities are open to you and how and where you can apply for them.

You can also find more information under the following links:

- <https://erasmusplus.at/de/hochschulbildung/studierende-und-graduierte/>,
- [https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates\\_de](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates_de)
- [https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/traineeships-vocational-education-apprenticeships-and-recent-graduates_en).

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## **In which fields of work and activities can I complete my internship in the individual countries?**

(Cf. EUPRAC curriculum, item 3.1)

For the countries participating in the EUPRAC project, the following places of employment for occupational therapists can be named:

- Clinics,
- rehabilitation facilities,
- Day care facilities,
- old people's/nursing homes,
- day care centres.

If the framework conditions are met, internships for foreign students can be offered both in the clinical setting and in the social sector.

As a special feature, private practices for occupational therapy should be mentioned here, especially for Germany and partly for Austria, which can offer a large part of all possible areas of activity of an occupational therapist for work with trainees due to their numerous target groups and the associated wide spectrum of treatment procedures. A special feature for Bulgaria is that due to the legal conditions of the occupational therapy profession, no internships are planned in hospitals, as these are not available as workplaces even after completion of the training.

## **Which internship periods are available in the countries participating in the EUPRAC project?**

The internship periods are usually specified by the study or training regulations of the respective countries. With regard to completing an internship abroad, special regulations also apply, some of which are also laid down in the regulations of the respective educational institutions. Interested students should therefore inform themselves as early as possible at their respective educational institution with the responsible internship officer.

The duration of the internship phases is also regulated by the study or training regulations of the respective countries. In the countries participating in the project, the scope of internships in the overall curriculum is between 25 and 40 %. The number of internship hours is between 1,020 and 1,720 hours. However, with a view to an internship in another European country, the length of each individual internship should not be less than 4 weeks. In addition, it should be mentioned at this point that the duration of the internship must be at least two months for students who are seeking funding for their stay abroad from the Erasmus+ programme. (Cf. EUPRAC Curriculum, item 4.1)



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## What skills do I need to be able to do an internship abroad?

Within the framework of the EUPRAC project, an expectation and offer profile for the assignment of students from other European countries was developed in cooperation with occupational therapy internship institutions. This profile can be found in the appendix to the EUPRAC curriculum under item 9.10. The internship coordinator responsible for you will also be happy to inform you about this.

Only the main points of the profile are presented here:

1. **specialized knowledge** - as a rule, specialized theoretical knowledge is expected according to the respective level of training and the ability of the trainees to implement this in a practice-related manner. For a targeted preparation of the internships, the prospective students should submit a portfolio on the current status of their subject-specific knowledge, skills and abilities to the responsible practical supervisors.
2. **competences for action**, among others:
  - Observing procedures and processes in the placement institution, using the observation opportunities offered,
  - communicating appropriately with clients, colleagues or other important contact persons,
  - reflecting on one's own professional behaviour,
  - the ability to draw conclusions from the current theoretical level of training for practical implementation,
  - to plan and carry out adapted activities
  - to ask oneself questions as well as professional exchange with the occupational therapists on site,
  - to act autonomously (taking into account the internship phases and the level of training).
3. **soft skills**, among others:
  - ability to cooperate, willingness to work in a team of therapists,
  - appropriate communication skills,
  - flexibility and willingness to change,
  - intercultural competences,
  - Resilience and health-conscious behaviour,
  - open-mindedness towards new things.
4. **attitudes expected**:
  - Professional motivation,
  - adherence to all professional ethics,
  - an understanding of performance and an appropriate demeanour,
  - Compliance with confidentiality and data protection.



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## 5. Technical language and language skills:

- Technical language skills, mastery of basic technical terms relevant to practice, also in the language of the target country,
- Knowledge of the various communication models and their application in practice,
- Basic knowledge of the language of the target country for the work with the clients (a corresponding language course in advance is recommended),
- at least knowledge of the English language.

### **What other general conditions do I have to take into account?**

Before starting the internship, ask the responsible persons at the internship institutions which legal and insurance conditions have to be observed in the respective destination country (e.g. professional liability and criminal law protection insurance).

Please also find out from your health insurance which benefits are covered abroad and, if necessary, take out additional insurance which includes, for example, repatriation in the event of illness.

Your responsible internship coordinator is available to answer any other important questions you may have.

### **Are there accommodation options near the internship institutions?**

Many institutions offer their interns support in finding accommodation. Please enquire about this with the responsible internship supervisor in the destination country.

### **Which vaccinations do I need to be allowed to work in the clinical setting in the respective destination country?**

The respective country-specific vaccination regulations apply, as well as the requirements of the internship institution responsible for you. Please enquire with the internship guidance in the target country about this, including whether you need to present a corresponding vaccination certificate.

You can get more information from your doctor or also through government vaccination recommendations for the respective country, such as in Austria under <https://www.gesundheit.gv.at/leben/gesundheitsvorsorge/impfungen/reiseimpfungen>.

### **Which documents and forms do I have to submit for recognition of the internship?**

You should pay attention to two main points here:

With regard to the evaluation of the completed internship by the responsible department, the following must be submitted, among others: Attendance records, internship assessments, patient report, training protocols, documentation, self-assessments, etc. (cf. EUPRAC curriculum. items 3.3, 6.1, 9.4).



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In order for the internship completed abroad to be recognised, an application for recognition of the internship must be submitted to the examination office of the university or university of applied sciences or to the person responsible for training at a higher vocational school. To do so, submit the following formal documents:

- internship report,
- internship assessment by the supervisor of the institution in which the internship was completed,
- proof of attendance with stamp, date and signature of the supervisor.

After the documents have been checked, you will be sent the recognition of the completed internship abroad.

You will receive information on this topic during the information event. Furthermore, your internship coordinator will be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding the required documents and forms.



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